
Complaints Policy

1. Context

CHARM-EU is an alliance of European Universities¹. Each university is recognised as a higher education institution by the relevant national ministry and quality authorities, providing higher level education. As members of the European Higher Education Area, the

- *European Standards Guidelines for Higher Education in the EHEA*² (ESG 2015) provide a common framework for internal quality assurance for all alliance partners;
- *European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes*³ (October 2014) provide a framework for an integrated approach to quality for joint programmes.

2. Purpose

This policy aims to guarantee transparent, fair, and prompt investigations of complaints, with the ultimate goal of achieving a clear resolution in accordance with the expectations set forth in the European framework documents mentioned earlier.

3. Definitions

Student: An individual who has formally applied, registered, and been admitted to a CHARM-EU educational programme.

(prospective) Applicant: An individual who has applied for a CHARM-EU educational programme or has engaged with CHARM-EU staff to that end, but is not formally registered or admitted as a student.

Internal staff: Teachers currently employed (salaried) by one of the alliance's universities that lasts at least a semester. This can be civil servant or not, temporary

¹ <https://www.charm-eu.eu/alliance>

² https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

³ https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/European-Approach-QA-of-Joint-Programmes_Yerevan-2015.pdf

or permanent contract, and any status.

4. Benefits

Information on the complaints policy and procedure is available in accessible format in the public domain to students, staff, partners and stakeholders.

5. Scope

- 5.1 A Complaint – For the purposes of this policy, a complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about a specific action or about the standards of provided services under the remit of a CHARM-EU activity as defined by one of the CHARM-EU Boards (e.g. Academic Council, Executive Board or Strategic Board).
- 5.2 This policy applies to complaints from registered students, applicants and internal staff within the competence of CHARM-EU Alliance relating to teaching, academic facilities, student support services, administrative services, alleged actions or inactions by the CHARM-EU alliance or a member of its staff;
- 5.3 This policy does not apply to:
- a. Decisions related to academic performance or progression arising from the Admissions Board and the Board of Examiners (Refer to Appeals Policy);
 - b. Complaints of a legal or statutory basis such as bullying, harassment, discrimination on any grounds, by or towards students and/or staff (Refer to the Dignity & Respect Policy).
 - c. Complaints concerning services offered by external entities, such as providers of internships and placements, or accommodation managed by external parties, fall under the responsibility of those entities.
 - d. Activities, teaching or otherwise which is not organised a CHARM-EU council or administrative body.
 - e. This policy does not apply to modules included in the CHARM-EU Online Course Catalogue whereby complaints should be made to relevant bodies in the university providing the module.

6. Principles

- 6.1 Complaints will be dealt with in a fair, transparent and timely manner.
- 6.2 Complainants will not be discriminated against or suffer any recrimination for bringing forward a complaint.

- 6.3 All complaints should be handled with discretion and all involved parties will take care to ensure that confidentiality is respected, and data related to the complaint is protected under EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 6.4 Complaints will be monitored and reported with the aim to understand, whenever feasible, the underlying causes and to take steps to prevent any future occurrences.
- 6.5 CHARM-EU is committed to creating excellence in teaching and learning by providing the appropriate measures that remove barriers to success and support student and staff access and participation needs.
- 6.6 CHARM-EU strictly forbids discrimination on any basis.
- 6.7 CHARM-EU is dedicated to fostering an open, welcoming, safe atmosphere, where all forms of diversity are recognized, respected, and regarded as a source of strength and benefit to the CHARM-EU community and beyond.

7. Policy

- 7.1 CHARM-EU will adhere to the timelines prescribed in the Complaints Procedure for the resolution of the complaint at all stages of the complaint process (informal – formal – appeal (level 1) –appeal (level 2)).
- 7.1 The Complaint Procedure will be available on the CHARM-EU website and will be provided in an accessible format on request.
- 7.2 The Complaints Procedure will be integral to monitoring the quality, effectiveness and non-discriminatory nature of the joint CHARM-EU programmes.
- 7.3 CHARM-EU will deal with complaints in line with confidentiality rules and according to the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and CHARM-EU Privacy Policy.
- 7.4 CHARM-EU will keep a register of complaints and will issue an annual report in an accessible format on the number of complaints received, their outcomes and any actions taken in response.
- 7.5 All stakeholders are required to read, understand and comply with this policy and the related procedure.

8. Responsibility

- 8.1 The Academic Council is responsible for oversight of this policy.
- 8.2 The Joint Virtual Administration Office is responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented as approved.



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9. Related Documents

9.2 CHARM-EU Complaints Procedure

9.3 CHARM-EU Complaints Form

9.4 Appeals Policy

10. Document Control

10.1 Date of initial approval: Academic Board 04/04/2024

10.2 Date policy effective from: April 2024

10.3 Date of next review: Academic Year 2026-2027

Appendices

Appendix 1: Complaint Form

Instructions:

This form should be completed in conjunction with the requirements of the Complaints Procedure (<https://www.charm-eu.eu/policies-and-regulations>). Complete all sections of the form.

If you encounter any barriers in terms of accessibility with the form, or you wish to submit your complaint in an alternative format, please let us know.

Be aware that the complaint will be shared with the person or service to which the complaint relates to.

Return completed form to: The Joint Administration Office at CHARM-JVAO@uu.nl

Section 1: Personal details

1.1	Your student number if available	Click here to enter text.
1.2	Your name Student/Applicant/Staff	Click here to enter text.
1.3	Your position:	Click here to enter text.
1.4	Your Email	Click here to enter text.
1.5	Contact number (Phone)	Click here to enter text.

Section 2: Details of complaint

2.1 Date of incident [Click here to enter a date.](#)

(Note: If the event happened over a period of time, please insert the start date of the incident)

2.2 Please provide a summary of your complaint below. If this is a group complaint, please list other complainants where relevant. (max 1250 chars)

Please provide a summary of your complaint below (max 1250 chars)



2.3 Have you tried discussing this complaint with the person or persons directly involved?

If so, how and with whom?.

Please provide a list of the people, positions, units you have communicated with (and the dates this occurred)

2.4 This is what happened and why I believe it did not resolve my complaint (max 1250 chars.)

Please provide a summary (max 1250 chars)

2.5 Please explain the impact of the issue on you (max 1250 chars.)

Please explain the impact (max 1250 chars)

2.6 If you are submitting a complaint more than six weeks following the last related incident please provide a brief explanation for the delay (max 1250 chars.)

If applicable, please provide a brief explanation for the delay (max 1250 chars)

2.7 Do you have a suggestion for a possible solution to your complaint? (maximum 250 characters) *

2.8 Have you already submitted this complaint elsewhere? If so, where? (maximum 250 characters) *

By submitting this form, I confirm that I have read the Complaints Policy and have attempted to resolve the matter locally (please check the box).

Appendix 2 Complaint Process Flow and Timeline

